

JUANITA DRIVE Master Plan Corridor Study



Advisory Committee Meeting #3 - Summary

DRAFT

Date: September 10, 2013

Time: 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Location: Kirkland City Hall, Rose Hill Room, 123 Fifth Avenue, Kirkland, WA

In attendance:

Project staff

- Rod Steitzer
City of Kirkland
- Kari Page
City of Kirkland
- Don Samdahl
Fehr & Peers
- Dennis Sandstrom
EnviroIssues
- Kurt Ahrensfield
Perteet

Committee Members

- Mike Haschak
Kirkland Fire Department
- Officer Lisa Brouelette
Kirkland Police Department
- Jon Pascal
Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance
- Pierre Geurts
Finn Hill Neighborhood, At Large
- Janice Gerrish
King County Parks Trail Board
- Sharon Clauson
King County Parks
- Daniel Weise
Cascade Bicycle Club

Committee Members not in attendance:

- Representative for King County Metro
- Katy Melin, Finn Hill Businesses
- Scott Emry, Lake Washington School District
- Nima Salestani, Finn Hill Businesses
- Lance Carter, Juanita Businesses
- Sheldon Haber, Bastyr University
- Norm Storme, Juanita Neighborhoods Association
- Tedd McCagg, Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance

Materials:

- Agenda
- Cross Section Maps and Concepts
- Master Plan Report Outline and Prioritization Criteria
- Fall 2013 Project Fact Sheet
- PowerPoint Presentation

Welcome and Introductions

Rod Steitzer welcomed the Juanita Drive Master Plan Corridor Study Advisory Committee and thanked them for taking the time to attend and provide their input.

Don Samdahl then reviewed the meeting agenda and noted what the project team hoped to accomplish during the meeting.

Dennis Sandstrom provided a brief update on the outreach activities the team had conducted since the last Advisory Committee meeting. The team staffed an information table and spoke with more than 90 people at DennyFest on Sunday, September 8. The following night, September 9, staff gave a brief presentation to the Juanita Neighborhood Association.

Alternative Concepts Review

Don Samdahl provided a review of how the design team has developed the current set of potential recommendations. The team has closely followed the guiding principles established at the beginning of this process. All current draft concepts include two lanes of traffic, bike lanes with a buffer, a walkway on at least one side of the street, improved pedestrian crossings, better lighting, drainage improvements, and traffic calming features. As a result, the benefits of the proposed improvements include slower speeds, fewer traffic conflicts, increased mobility and better visibility for drivers. The team has also identified potential issues to consider as these plans progress: improved enforcement of parking restrictions, property impacts, potential tree removal, project phasing and timing, and funding.

Mike Haschak asked how long the traffic calming medians would be. Don Samdahl said they would be about 25 to 30 feet in length and would only be used sporadically throughout the corridor.

Don Samdahl then reviewed the example cross section concepts for various locations in the corridor. These cross sections are color coded with lines found on the corridor maps provided to committee members outlining various segments of Juanita Drive. In some areas in the corridor there are opportunities to consider a couple different cross section options. The most conservative cross section option, 39 to 41 feet across, would still require a few feet of additional pavement depending on the location it is applied. The widest cross section option is 55 to 57 feet across and includes two lanes of traffic, a median/turn lane, bike lanes and a walkway on both sides of the street.

For several places throughout the corridor, staff recommends considering a buffer strip between the travel lane and bike lane. This buffer could be anything from a wide painted section to a rumble strip or raised curb.

Jon Pascal asked if it would be possible to show improvements that are between the full build options and the existing; options that show what interim improvements could be made that are easier and cheaper to accomplish in the short-term. Don Samdahl said that this is something the team is considering and was hoping to hear from the committee what those could be later in the meeting.

Jon Pascal added that he felt having a multiuse path in only certain sections seemed fragmented.

Janice Gerrish raised a concern about the use of planter strips in the corridor given their cost and existing natural environment. Janice Gerrish said that she would like to see crosswalks go in first.

Don Samdahl reviewed the potential concepts, starting at the south end. Kurt then shared the team's review of using Juanita Lane as a pedestrian or bicycle route. Due to space and use constraints of this area there does not seem to be a good option for rerouting bicycle and/or pedestrian traffic.

Janice Gerrish asked if the property owners with the driveway across from Juanita Lane could change the location of their driveway to the north. Kurt said that he was not sure about this option; however the slopes on the other side of their house are steep and may prohibit this from occurring.

Pierre Geurts said that few people who live around Goat Hill do not tend to walk on Juanita Drive around the sharp curve, but would be OK with staying on the neighborhood streets. Don Samdahl suggested that pedestrian improvements could be prioritized for east of the curve and then focus on bicycle improvements around the curve.

Kari Page then provided an update on the potential for completing the pedestrian connection in Goat Hill. The property owners are currently considering the City's offer to find a solution that would allow a multiuse trail connection. The offer was made in July 2013 – no further action has been made.

Kurt then reviewed the potential improvements for the intersection of 80th Avenue NE and Juanita Drive. Improvements include lane reconfiguration and improved pedestrian crossings. Pierre Geurts asked if it would be possible to provide better sight lines looking north on Juanita Drive from 80th Avenue NE. Kurt said that this could be an option if certain right of way road grading improvements are made.

Janice Gerrish said that many citizens do not like resurfacing natural surface trails with unnatural surfaces. Don Samdahl said they are not currently proposing any trail resurfacing.

In the section through Juanita Woodlands Park, Pierre Geurts asked if it would be possible to modify the concept of having a planter strip between the bike lane and multipurpose pathway by creating a new trail cut out on the east side of the roadway as a potential pedestrian route. Don Samdahl said his team would consider this option. Janice Gerrish suggested the team speak with school administrators about how this would related to safe routes for schools.

Kurt Ahrensfield then reviewed the two options being considered for the 76th PL NE and NE 122nd Place intersection. Daniel Weise said that roundabouts are preferred from a bicyclist's perspective. Lisa Brouelette asked how the emergency lane cut-through from the fire station would be marked. Her concern was other users would unsafely utilize this option. Kurt Ahrensfield noted examples used in similar situations. Don Samdahl said that the team recognizes the difficulty of making improvements in this area and, since there are currently no strong concerns about traffic flow through this intersection, the team would most likely note it as a lower priority.

Don Samdahl said the team has received a lot of positive responses to the option for having a pedestrian connection at NE 132nd St. connecting from Juanita Drive west to 72nd Ave NE. Dennis Sandstrom added that many people staff spoke with at DennyFest expressed the same support for this improvement.

Kurt Ahrensfield shared the staff's review of using a roundabout at the NE 132nd St. intersection. The right of way impacts were pretty significant and no functionality was added. This option will not be carried forward.

Don Samdahl then reviewed the potential improvements through Big Finn Hill Park. Two options were considered: (1) the basic cross section with a walkway on the east side along the roadway; and (2) a multi-purpose trail on the east side with a planter strip separation. The multi-path would have more park and right-of-way impacts, but would provide a safe pathway for pedestrians and cyclists into and along the park. Some committee members were concerned about the park impacts.

Don Samdahl asked the committee if they had a preference for the use of the roundabouts at the NE 138th Pl and NE 138th St intersections. Janice Gerrish expressed concern about the use of roundabouts, due to impacts on right of way. Don Samdahl mentioned concerns he heard about the ability for eastbound traffic to turn north from NE 138th Place; in this situation, a roundabout might make the most sense.

Sharon suggested that design treatments be considered as a great way to distinguish the park area along the corridor. Don Samdahl suggested that using the gateway medians at either end could be used to accomplish this effect.

Daniel Weise asked if the decision about the type of treatments for bicycle lanes would be decided now or once funds are allocated. Rod Steitzer said that improvements will be bundled based on the potential for funding and feasibility. Don Samdahl added that the report would highlight the basic cross section and locations for improvements, but that the final decision could be made later regarding specific bicycle treatments.

Janice Gerrish recommended having a fairly wide striping of high-reflective paint along the entire corridor, as well as other visual safety improvements.

Prioritization Criteria and Master Plan Outline Review

Don Samdahl thanked the committee for their feedback and noted that staff will use their input on the refinement of these recommendations. He added that the team will also use prioritization criteria based on the project's guiding principles. The committee members approved of the criteria presented. Pierre Geurts suggested adding usability or accessibility as a criteria, beyond providing more mobility options.

Janice Gerrish cautioned the team about improvements having a negative impact on the businesses along the corridor. Don Samdahl said that the team is cognizant of the importance of the local businesses in the area.

Don Samdahl then reviewed the proposed report outline. The committee members had no comments on the outline. Don Samdahl noted that the team will also be developing a one-page fact sheet for each project the City to use for future grant opportunities or other purposes.

Janice Gerrish asked if the City is considering whether to designate any sections of Juanita Drive as having historical significance. Rod Steitzer said that this team was not asked to make any investigations into the historical significance of the corridor, but the City could do this in the future if it relates to a particular grant.

Next Steps

Dennis Sandstrom then provided an overview of the upcoming open house in early October and other outreach activities, including an information table at the City's Planning Day and a presentation to the Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance. He encouraged the committee members to promote the upcoming open house to their respective groups.

Don Samdahl thanked the committee members again for their time and input.

The meeting was then adjourned.